

From: "Montgomery, Steve" <revsteve@idlewildchurch.org>
To: "William Gibbons (wgibbons)" <wgibbons@memphis.edu>
Date: 2/26/2018 3:00:35 PM
Subject: Re: Fw: A note on Saturday's event

No, I hadn't seen this, and all I knew about it was in the paper.
Sometimes "outsiders" can bring a much needed "outside" perspective. (I think of some of the civil rights struggles.)
However, sometimes they come not understanding at all what the issues are, and have their own agendas. Memphis has its issues, to be sure, but this is one of those cases where the speaker had no idea...
Just my two cents worth.
thanks for sharing.

Stephen R. Montgomery, D.Min.
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Memphis, TN 38104
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On Mon, Feb 26, 2018 at 11:46 AM, William Gibbons (wgibbons) <wgibbons@memphis.edu> wrote:
Steve,

I don't know if you are on the mayor's email list but wanted to make sure you saw this. (This was an inappropriate speaker for a city-sponsored event !)

Bill Gibbons
Executive Director
Public Safety Institute

The University of Memphis
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Memphis, TN 38152

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From: Mayor Jim Strickland <MayorOffice@communications.memphistn.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2018 7:05 AM
To: William Gibbons (wgibbons)
Subject: A note on Saturday's event



MAYOR STRICKLAND'S

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Friends,

You may have seen this weekend where, at an event we held to honor the courageous Memphis sanitation workers of 1968, a cable news pundit in part attacked Memphis and all of us who are working every single day for a better Memphis.

Make no mistake: I think we have a lot of work ahead of us, too. That's why we're clear-eyed about our challenges and have been deeply engaged in the work to address them ever since we arrived here two years ago.

But as your mayor, as someone who has the honor to see this work up close and personal every single day, I feel compelled to defend our city — particularly against the items the speaker got wrong.

Such as:

- She criticized our efforts to seek stiffer sentences for violent crimes and felons in possession of guns, and to prosecute gun crimes in the federal system. Here in Memphis, though, citizens from every neighborhood are fed up with crime and tell me often how they want to punish those who commit violent acts. I stand with Memphians on this.
- She said Memphis spends more on police than education. That's not true. Memphians pay state and county taxes for Shelby County Schools, which has a \$1.3 billion annual budget. Memphians pay city taxes for Memphis Police, which last year had a \$258 million budget.
- She said we use the policing tactic of "stop-and-frisk." We do not.
- She said Memphis has made no progress in 50 years. Yet just with our sanitation workers alone, there has been tremendous progress. Our current workers make a living wage, receive benefits and have a strong retirement plan — all items that weren't provided in 1968.

Like most every Memphian, I wholeheartedly agree that we have much more improvement to make in so many of these areas — such as the child poverty rate, which the speaker mentioned. Having the opportunity to address these issues is a big reason I ran for mayor in 2015, and why you elected me.

I'm proud of what we've done in just over two years in office — items such as thousands of Memphians finding employment, increasing City programming and amenities for youth, rebuilding MPD, dramatically improving the City's contracting spend with minority businesses, and better serving the public with a more transparent and efficient government.

But I'm even more proud of the great work I see in our city every single day. Yes, Memphis has challenges — but for every challenge, we seem to have so many Memphians working to overcome them. At City government alone, we're on the front lines with great public servants at MPD and Memphis Fire, among so many others. And in the community, groups like Memphis Athletic Ministries, Streets Ministries, Hope Works, and Alpha Omega Veterans Services (I could go on and on, of course) simply don't get the spotlight that they deserve.

Fact is, it's easy to criticize the challenges we've faced for decades.

It's harder to actually do something.

I'm reminded of what President Teddy Roosevelt said more than a century ago. It remains true today.

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds."

To everyone in the arena in Memphis today, know this: I thank you, and I stand with you. Because of the work you do, our future is bright.

Yours,



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